

Naval War College Review

Volume 57
Number 2 *Spring*

Article 2

2004

President's Forum

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Recommended Citation

Route, Ronald A. (2004) "President's Forum," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 57 : No. 2 , Article 2.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol57/iss2/2>

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PRESIDENT'S FORUM



Study the past if you would define the future.

CONFUCIUS

It is change, continuing change, inevitable change that is the dominant factor in society today. No sensible decision can be made any longer without taking into account not only the world as it is, but the world as it will be.

ISAAC ASIMOV

WE EXPECT A LOT FROM OUR FACULTY at the Naval War College. They teach, conduct research, advise on issues of national security, and contribute to their respective bodies of knowledge in their fields. Some come to the College from a more traditional academic back-

ground; others bring with them the invaluable experience they have gained in combat or in their service in the fleet, with the regional combatant commanders, or in the policy and resource planning environment of Washington, D.C. We are very fortunate that a number of our superb faculty bring all of these capabilities to bear in Newport, because of the diversity of their backgrounds.

We demand that our faculty know and appreciate the lessons of history, but we also expect that they can translate these lessons into the context of future events. History for history's sake is of no value to us. What is of value is the ability of our faculty to use whatever is necessary to educate officers to solve complex problems, manage change, and execute their decisions. This demands an extraordinary degree of mental flexibility and intellectual agility on the part of our faculty, whether they come from the world of practitioners or from the more traditional academic environment. The readers of this issue of the *Review* will be asked to exercise a similar degree of mental agility.

Within these pages you will find articles on the Soviet Navy of the 1970s and on Stalin's navy of earlier decades. These pieces are timely, in light of the "Cold War at Sea" conference that the College will co-host in May 2004. Sponsored jointly by the Naval War College, Brown University, and the USS *Saratoga* Foundation, the conference will bring together Cold War adversaries who once operated in close proximity to each other on, above, and beneath the seas. The focal point of this unique event will be an intensive three-day conference that will commemorate the proud service of sailors from the former Soviet Union and the United States. This series of meetings, to be held at both the Naval War

College and at Brown University's Watson Institute in Providence, is expected to bring new understanding of the strategic and operational challenges faced by both navies during this extraordinary period in naval history. Sergei Khrushchev, son of the former Soviet premiere, has been a driving force behind the conference. Sergei is now a faculty member at Brown University and an adjunct faculty member at the Naval War College.

In addition to having value as a significant historical study, the portions of the conference that look at the early Cold War period may yield new perspectives on the challenges that the U.S. Navy faces in the current international security environment. For Naval War College students, the conference represents a unique opportunity to grapple with such classic concepts as crisis stability and escalation—concepts that are largely unfamiliar to today's officers but that could once again command our attention.

Also within this issue you will find an in-depth look at current and future operations of the U.S. Coast Guard, in a very informative article by Admiral Tom Collins, USCG, its current Commandant. These are dynamic times for the Coast Guard, which will soon embark on the largest capital-acquisition program in the service's history—the Deepwater Project, wherein virtually all cutters, aircraft, and command and control systems will be replaced. Mutual cooperation among the Coast Guard, the Navy, and all of the Defense Department has never been greater, as evidenced by Coast Guard support for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and by Admiral Collins's participation in the International Seapower Symposium held here in Newport last October. Admiral Collins is a proponent of a broadened definition of maritime security cooperation that will require new thinking, new partnerships, and new constructs to ensure the safety and freedom of the seas for all.

Finally, enclosed with this issue you will find a recently produced digital video disk (DVD) that portrays the nature of the Naval War College experience. I encourage you to view the disk and then share it with others who may be interested in knowing more about this great institution and the important work that is done here.

We ask you to look to the past, with our focus on the former Soviet Navy; to the present, with our DVD tour of the campus; and to the future, with our partners in the U.S. Coast Guard. I hope you enjoy this issue.

R. A. ROUTE

*Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
President, Naval War College*